WSDOT Aviation System Plan Working Group Meeting
Meeting Summary
September 10, 2004
Puget Sound Regional Council Offices

Aviation System Plan Working Group Members in Attendance:

Paul Bennett –QUADCO RTPO
Greg Cioc – Pennisula RTPO
Ron Foraker – Washington Airport Managers Association
Bob Hart – Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council
Carol Key – Federal Aviation Administration
Steve Kiehl – Puget Sound Regional Council
Mark Kushner – Benton- Franklin Walla Walla RTPO
Doug Maples – City of Yakima
James Morasch – Washington Public Ports Association
Toni Long – Airlift Northwest
Nisha Hanchinamani – WSDOT Aviation
Stan Allison – WSDOT Aviation
Kirk Kleinholz – Washington Pilots Association
Jeff Wilkens – Wenatchee Valley Transportation Council, MPO
Page Scott - WSDOT
Kelly Simpson – Senate Highways and Transportation Committee
David Ketchum – Community Airports Association
John Shambaugh –WSDOT Aviation
John Sibold –WSDOT Aviation
Rita Brogan –PRR

Welcome
Stan Allison, WSDOT Manager of Airport Operations, welcomed the Aviation System
Plan Working Group members and outlined the meeting agenda, which included:

- ∞ Decision Process Review
- ∞ Airport Classification System
- ∞ Survey Recap
- ∞ Evaluation Criteria
- ∞ Next Steps

Working Group Goals
Mr. Allison described the two main goals for the meeting:

- ∞ Develop recommended Airport Classification System.
- ∞ Develop recommendations on evaluation criteria and weighting methodology.

Mr. Allison explained that this systematic decision process will filter into both the Aviation System Plan and Washington Transportation Plan (WTP). Mr. Allison emphasized WSDOT's appreciation for the group members' attendance and participation.

Washington's Transportation Planning Hierarchy
Mr. Allison showed group members a diagram explaining how modal and regional plans filter into WTP. Again, he emphasized the importance of including the Aviation System Plan in both regional transportation plans and WTP.

Aviation System Plan Policy Goals
As a quick recap, Mr. Allison outlined the four key goals of the Aviation System Plan:
- ∞ Preservation
- ∞ Safety
- ∞ Capacity
- ∞ Environmental Protection

Proposed System Plan Decision Process
Mr. Allison presented the suggested process, which includes:

1. Scoping
   - ∞ Outreach
   - ∞ RTPO briefings

2. Task Force
   - ∞ Issue ID
   - ∞ Classification system
   - ∞ Evaluation criteria
   - ∞ Report to RTPOs

3. Review
   - ∞ Aviation Advisory Committee
   - ∞ Public review
   - ∞ RTPO review

After review, the new data will be used in regional transportation plans, the Aviation System Plan, and the Washington Transportation Plan.

Steps in Developing the Aviation System Plan
In summarizing the steps, Mr. Allison explained that we need to define what the system should be, determine what it will cost, and decide how to pay for it. The system plan update is a six-step process.

Step 1. Inventory and forecast existing public use airports. This step is mostly completed and includes background information collected over the last several years.
Step 2. Evaluation and classification of airport function and role within the system. The Aviation Work Group was formed specifically to identify and classify public use airports.

<u>Step 3.</u> Identification of deficiencies in the system. The next step in the process will be to identify classification objectives or desires to fulfill the aviation goals over the next 20 years. This step will also be used to identify gaps and deficiencies in the aviation system.
<u>Step 4.</u> Estimation of development costs to maintain the aviation system.
<u>Step 5.</u> Funding the system.
<u>Step 6.</u> Capital facility plan.

Revised Draft Objectives: Aviation System Plan
As discussed during the July 13, 2004 meeting the following are draft objectives:
- ∞ Safeguard airports for future generations.
  - o Assure compatible land use.
  - o Identify system deficiencies.
- ∞ Sensitive to balance between region and state.
  - o Integrate with regional, state and local comprehensive plans.
  - o Coordinate with systems in adjoining states.
- ∞ Promote economic development.
  - o Accessibility for people/goods, including emergency services.
  - o Support local economy.
  - o Recognize benefits beyond immediate geographic area.
- ∞ Manage resources effectively.
  - o Ensure airport investments are cost effective and fiscally responsible.
  - o Maximize access to federal funds.

Comments
- ∞ Emergency services should be in a separate category.
- ∞ We should think about system enhancements – not just meeting standards.
- ∞ We should strengthen the long-term asset value of publicly owned airports.
- ∞ We recognize what the state is trying to accomplish with this process, but need to ensure that community airports are not left in the dark.

Question
Q: *If the state decides not to fund an airport, will it fall on the local community?*
A: The goal is to think of this process in terms of needs and deficiencies rather than funding. Once we decide where the funding needs are, it is possible that local communities will have to contribute.

Classification Comparison
WSDOT Aviation's John Shambaugh provided group members with a handout outlining classification systems from Oregon, Nebraska, and Georgia. The handout also contained staff recommendations on a classification system for Washington State.

Recommended Airport Classifications
Recommendations should state what each classification should be able to do. Mr. Shambaugh presented the suggested airport classification:

- ∞ Commercial Service
    - o Can accommodate scheduled passenger service.

- ∞ Regional
    - o High activity airports.
    - o Capable of supporting business jets.
    - o Able to accommodate all types of general aviation aircraft.
    - o Able to accommodate aircraft in inclement weather.

- ∞ Local Community Airports
    - o Serves medium to small communities and local business activities.
    - o Can accommodate single and multi general aviation.

- ∞ Recreation or Remote Airports
    - o Serves recreation communities, recreation destinations and remote backcountry airports. May also be strategically located for emergency, medical and firefighting access in mountainous or other remote areas.

- ∞ Seaplane Bases
    - o Approved designated water landing areas.

Questions:

Q: Is there a difference between "can" accommodate and "does" accommodate?
A: This classification system is flexible and will take into account services that an airport doesn't currently provide, but is capable of providing.

Q: Does cargo fit in under commercial or regional?
A: Cargo fits into both categories. There is a significant range of airports that provide cargo service. Service may also include local community airports and recreation airports.

Q: Where would state airports fit?
A: They could fit under the remote or recreation airports category. Many of them are backcountry and are used for emergency operations. We need to examine realistically what each airport is used for today.

Comments:
- ∞ Change the classification, "Low-Activity" to "Recreation or remote."
- ∞ Make sure that access to emergency and medical facilities is included as criteria, across the aviation system classification scheme.
- ∞ Specify different levels of emergency services.
- ∞ If an airport has deficiencies, but is near a medical facility, that airport should receive funding at a higher priority.
- ∞ We should look at the travel patterns from different types of aircraft to see where the demand is.

Demand Factors

Mr. Shambaugh presented the five different demand factors that group members would evaluate:

Access
- ∞ Associated with providing a broad range of public access to air transportation for moving people and goods on the ground or in the air.
- ∞ Some determining factors when considering access to the aviation system are population, population density, employment, primary road access, based aircraft, and registered pilots and aircraft.

Airport Facilities
- ∞ Typical facilities include length and width of runways, approach capabilities, taxiways and weather systems.
- ∞ Determines the range, type and use of airport according to Airport Reference Code (ARC).
- ∞ ARC identifies characteristics of aircraft that frequent an airport, based primarily on aircraft approach speed and wingspan.

Airport Services
- ∞ Contributes to the use and role of an airport.
- ∞ Includes services such as fuel, aircraft repair, air charter services, and flight training.
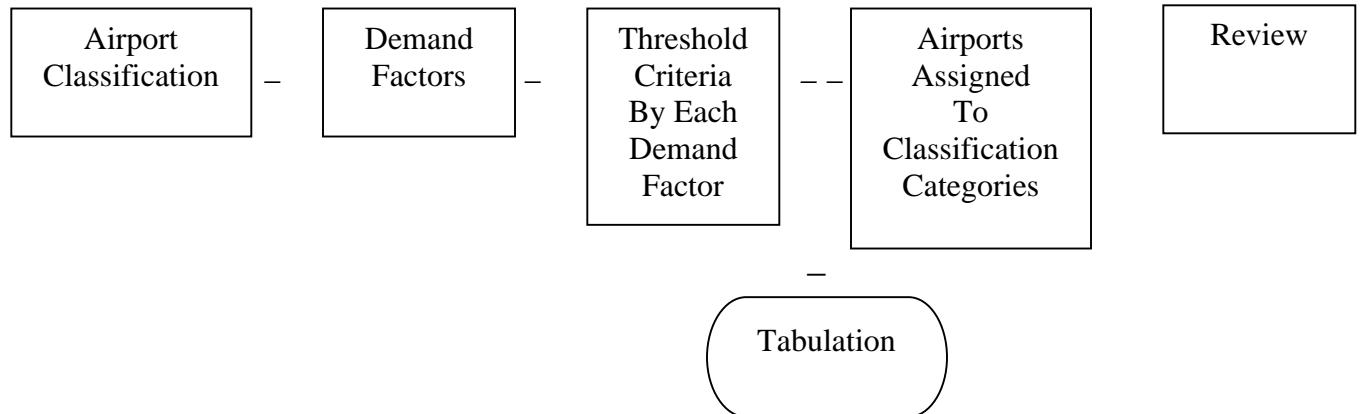
Expansion and Preservation
- ∞ Affect airport's ability to provide safe operations and expand to accommodate future demand or capacity issues.
- ∞ Determining factors may include local support, operation safety issues, height obstructions, and environmental or manmade factors.

Economic Opportunities
- ∞ The airport's role in state, regional, local economies.
- ∞ Higher concentrations of based aircraft, registered pilots, and aircraft usually indicate higher levels of public access and economic opportunities.

Recommended Threshold Criteria and Weighting Method
Mr. Shambaugh presented the following suggested method for classifying the state's system of airports:

| Airport Classification | – | Demand Factors | – | Threshold Criteria By Each Demand Factor | – – | Airports Assigned To Classification Categories | | Review |

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Tabulation

Survey Results
Rita Brogan provided a summary of the results from a survey that most working group members completed prior to the meeting. Group members received a handout, which provided a complete summary. Overall, the survey results were consistent with the results from the first survey. Brogan stated that commercial and regional airports were ranked highest for demand factors. Additionally, economic activity was a higher concern than other factors for local interest and seaplane bases. Results regarding threshold criteria were:

Access
- ∞ Different threshold criteria for different types of airports.
- ∞ Emergency response is most important for regional, local, and seaplane based facilities.
- ∞ Inter-modal connectivity most important for commercial.

Facilities
- ∞ Higher facility requirements for commercial and regional across all categories.
- ∞ Local and seaside both are high on approach capabilities and safety standards.

Services
- ∞ Commercial and regional score high on fuel, repair services, room for future expansion, and ability to accommodate air cargo.
- ∞ Flight training most appropriate to regional and local airports.

Expansion and Preservation
- ∞ Commercial and regional airports mirror each other on most criteria.
- ∞ Local and seaplane based facilities are similar.

Economic Opportunities
- ∞ Each airport type presents different types of economic opportunities.

- ∞ Commercial is high for commercial and economic development, and air cargo.
- ∞ Regional ranks higher than commercial in concentration of based aircraft.
- ∞ Tourism is important for local and seaside.

Questions:
Q: *Why is there a separate category for seaplane bases?*
A: Seaplane bases are unique: they are in a separate statewide plan and have different funding requirements and needs.
Q: *Under what type of airport should we put air cargo?*
A: The market decides on air cargo needs. It's difficult to put it under just one type.

Comments:
- ∞ We need to look a seaplane bases uniquely and explore potential for municipally owned docks to be used to access remote communities.
- ∞ Seaplane bases have potential for emergency use during a regional disaster.

Small Group Discussion
Group members were split into four small groups. Each was assigned one demand factors (one group received two demand factors). Ms. Brogan asked groups to answer the follow questions about the threshold criteria for each demand factor:

- ∞ Are these the right criteria?
- ∞ Are there other criteria?
- ∞ Can they be measured?
- ∞ How applicable, on a scale of 0-5, is the proposed criteria to the demand factor?
- ∞ Other suggestions or advice?

**Group #1 – Services and Economic Development
(Representative: David Ketchum)**
Mr. Ketchum explained that members of his group looked at potential vs. existing services at airports. Group #1 rated the criteria as follows:

SERVICES

Scheduled passenger service	4
Ground Transportation	3
Pilot Lounge/Information Center	4
Fuel Av/Jet	5
Aircraft Repairs	4
Infrastructure expansion (Air/land)	4
Flight Training	3
Air Cargo	2
Food Services	3

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Property and Infrastructure Expansion	4
Supports commercial, industrial and aviation resource development in community	4
Contributes to the region's economic development needs through local plans	4
Can/will accommodate a range of commercial and/or general aviation activities and service	5
Supports transportation link to major urban areas	3
Serves tourism, cultural, and recreation resources	4
Supports high number of based aircraft	5
Supports air cargo service	2
Supports medical services	4
Supports fire, disaster relief, and government emergency services	5
Foreign Trade	4

Group #2 – Facilities
(Representative - Paul Bennett)
Mr. Bennett's group removed "flexible and expandable to meet demand" (under Expansion and Preservation).

FACILITIES

Runway length and width	5
Approach capability	3
Taxiway systems in place	3
Runway surface type	3
Pavement strength	5
Aprons	3
Hangars	1
Weather reporting system	4
Capable of meeting safety standards	5
Ability to accommodate new aircraft types	2
Helipads	2
Number of operations	2
Lighting systems	3
Navigation Aid Package	5

Group #3 – Access
Representative – Kirk Kleinholz
Kleinholz noted that his group thought all the criteria were applicable and measurable.
He also said that priority of criteria varies by airport.

ACCESS

Passenger service	5
Population	5
Based aircraft	3
Distance from highway	5
Serves remote/rural communities	5
Emergency medical	5

Group #4 – Expansion and Preservation
Representative – Doug Maples

EXPANSION AND PRESERVATION

Designated as an Essential Public Facility	Important
Programs in place to protect the airport from incompatible development	5
Existing manmade or natural obstructions that limit airport expansion	5
Local funding and community level support	4
Current compatible surrounding land use	5
Expansion for air/landside development	2
Compatible airport zoning	5

Next Steps
- Staff will apply committee recommendations to aviation system.
- Review recommendations with aviation interests and RTPO's.
- Get feedback from legislature and other policy makers on System Plan objectives.
- Work with RTPO's to integrate aviation into transportation system.
- Begin process of identifying system deficiencies.